THE LIMNER COMPANY



ENGLISH SCHOOL (19th century)

Portrait enamel of George III (1738 - 1820) wearing a red coat with black facings, gold buttons and epaulettes, the breast star of the order of the Garter on his left, white chemise, black stock, his powdered wig worn en queue and tied with a white ribbon bow

Circa: Early 19th century

early 19th century

Enamel on copper

Oval, 70 mm (2 $^{3}/_{4}$ in) high

Gilt-metal frame

This enamel is taken after the original full length oil portrait by Sir William Beechey, which was an extremely popular image of the King, endlessly reproduced during the years following its conception in 1799-1800.

Engravers, miniaturists and enamellers (including Henry Bone R.A.), William Grimaldi and Samuel Cotes, adapated the image to a bust length format which could be worn or carried by the owner. Many of these depict the King in a black bicorn hat.

Henry Bone, as always, was more ambitious than most of his fellow enamellers, producing a full-length copy which has remained in The Royal Collection[1].

Although unsigned, it is likely that the present work is one of many painted by Bone and his studio

assistants for the King to present as a gift. Bone was appointed enamel painter to the Prince of Wales in 1801 and thereafter to King George III, King George IV and King William IV. A series of royal and historical sitters after artists such as Beechey, Hoppner, Lawrence, Lely, Opie, Reynolds and copies after Old Masters were commissioned and acquired by his royal patrons[2]. Bone enjoyed huge popularity in his day, and several thousand people visited his Berners Street studio to admire his copies – in particular his largest copy, Bacchus and Ariadne after Titian which was bought by George Bowles for 2,200 gns.[3]

[1] R. Walker, *Miniatures in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen*, Cambridge, 1992, nos.744-5,814

[2] V. Remington, *Victorian Miniatures in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen*, London, 2010, I, pp. 69-82

[3] The Walpole Society, 1999, vol. LXI, p. 306 and later sold Christie's, London, 20 February 1973, lot 123. The largest of Bone's enamels, Bacchus and Ariadne measured approximately 416 x 445 mm.